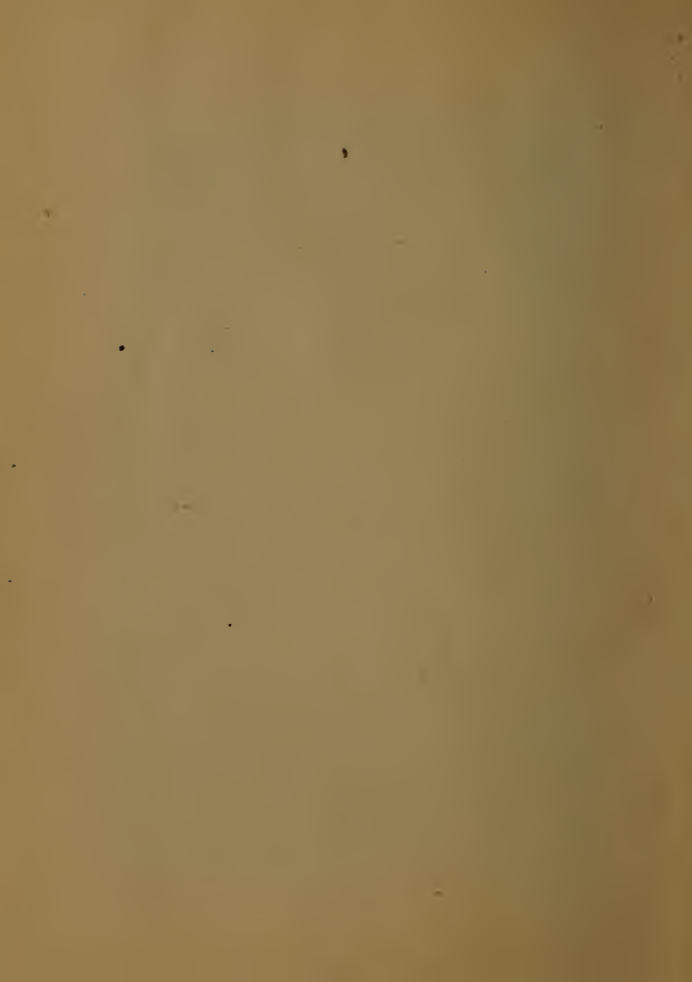


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HYMNS TO JESUS.

FROM THE

17
EARLY ENGLISH.



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THE poems here collected, as well as the fragment of prose appended, are taken from a manuscript bearing the date of 1430. They are the work of unknown, probably of various hands.

As interesting specimens of Early English, these hymns were introduced during the year 1868, by a literary society of England, to the small circle of its members.

In preparing them for the more general reader, there has been no attempt at modernizing beyond what seemed necessary in order to render them pleasing and intelligible without the aid of glossary and notes.

The work has been its own reward: yet the compiler will feel an added pleasure if this little book shall serve in any degree to point the way to some of the hid treasures

HYMNS TO JESUS.

of our noble old English language ; if it shall bring any of us nearer in spirit to the simplicity and fervor of the days in which these hymns were written ; above all, if it shall deepen the reverence of any mind for that blessed Name in which good men of every age and land have put their trust.

NEW HAVEN, CONN., *Sept.*, 1869.

THE SWEETNESS OF JESUS.

JESU, Thy sweetness who might see,
And have it to him fully shown,
All earthly love would bitter be,
All nought would be, save Thine alone.
I pray Thee, Lord, that lore teach me
After Thy love to hunger most,
To set my heart alone on Thee,
And in Thy beauty make my boast.

Such pleasant love on earth none is,
His beauty if I can but see,
His love will fill my heart with bliss,
For "King of Love" is calléd He.
With truest love (I pray for this)
Firmly to Him I'd bounden be,
So that my heart were wholly His,
And nothing pleaséd me but He.

HYMNS TO JESUS.

If nature bids me love my kin,
Then (I was thinking in my thought)
Even by this law, I should begin
At Him who hath me made of nought.
His likeness lives my soul within,
And all this world for me He wrought ;
He, Father-like, my love did win,
And to His heaven He hath me brought.

Mother-like, too, He — well I ween —
Before my birth to me took heed,
And since, by baptism washed me clean,
Who was defiled through Adam's deed.
With noble meat He feedeth me
(For His flesh that is meat indeed) ;
A better food may no man see —
To lasting life it will me lead.

Brothers' and sisters' place He'll fill ;
So hath He said and taught this lore,
That whoso wrought His Father's will,

HYMNS TO JESUS.

Brethren to Him, the Lord, they were.
My nature, too, He took, and I
Full truly trust in Him, therefore,
That He will never let me die,
But with His mercy salve my sore.

The love of Jesus passeth sure
All earthly love that may be here ;
My spouse He is, my bridegroom pure,
We'll ought I, then, to hold Him dear ;
Both heaven and earth are wholly His,
And Lord He is, of greatest power ;
Calléd is He "the King of Bliss ;"
I long to learn His love's deep lore.

Upon His love methinketh long,
For He hath mine full dearly bought ;
When I was far from Him with wrong,
From heaven to earth He hath me sought.
My wretched nature, too, He bore,
And all His pride He set at nought,

HYMNS TO JESUS.

Poverty saw, and suffering sore,
Ere me to lasting life He brought.

From heaven to earth He came away,
To free me when I was a slave ;
My love alone such gift can pay,
Yet for my love His life He gave.
With my great foe He fought for me,
Wounded He was, and bitterly bled,
His precious blood full plenteously,
Full piteously, for me was shed.

His sides all bruised and bloody were
That sometime were full fair to see ;
His heart was piercéd with a spear ;
His grievous wounds were ruth to see ;
He gave His life for guilt of me,
My ransom He hath made secure ;
His death should be full dear to me,
And pierce my heart with pity pure.

HYMNS TO JESUS.

For pity my heart should break in two,
If to His kindness I took heed ;
I was the cause of all His woe,
Punished was He for my misdeed.
To lasting life that I might go,
His manhood suffered death most sore ;
Yet, when He willed to leave His woe,
He rose again through Godhead's power.

Heaven's plenteous bliss His toil hath paid ;
Crowned is the King that did prevail ;
His banner broad is still displayed
Whene'er my foe will me assail.
Well ought I, then, to be His own,
He is the friend will never fail,
And nothing asketh He for boon,
But true love for His fierce travail.

With loving works to do His will,
I truly ought if I were kind,

HYMNS TO JESUS.

Both night and day His word fulfill,
And ever have my Lord in mind ;
But ghostly foes they grieve me ill,
Frail is my flesh, and I am blind ;
To His great mercy fly I still,
No better safety can I find.

No better safety is for me
Than to His mercy to betake,
Who, with His ransom, made me free,
And me, a wretch, His child will make.
I pray Thee, Lord, for pity sweet,
Grant I may never Thee forsake ;
But give me grace from sin to flee,
And love to Thee that may not slake.

Jesu, for Thy great sweetness' sake,
Have mind of me when hence I wend ;
To Thee my sinful soul wilt take,
And shield me, Lord, against the fiend !

HYMNS TO JESUS.

Thy mercy pardon all I miss,
 Thy grace my soul to heaven send!
 Thus lead me, Lord, into Thy bliss,
 To live and love Thee without end!
 Amen.

RICHARD DE CASTRE'S PRAYER TO
 JESUS.

Oratio magistri Richardi de Castre quam ipse posuit.

JESU, my Lord, that madest me,
 And with Thy blesséd blood hast bought,
 Forgive what I have grievéd Thee,
 With word, with will, and eke with thought.

Jesu, in whom is all my trust,
 Who died upon the rugged tree,
 Withdraw my heart from fleshly lust,
 And from all worldly vanity.

HYMNS TO JESUS.

Jesu, O, for Thy five wounds' smart,
On side, and hands, and blest feet two,
Wilt make me meek and low of heart,
And Thee to love as I should do.

Jesu, and for the bitter wound
That went into Thy very soul,
For sin that hath my spirit bound,
Thy blessed blood must make me whole.

And, Jesu, Christ, to Thee I call,
Who art a God all full of might ;
O, keep me clean, lest I should fall
In deadly sin, by day or night.

Jesu, O, grant me what I ask,
Perfect my patience, give me peace,
And never may I do that thing
Shall Thee in any wise displease.

Jesu, who art our heavenly King,
Most truly God, and man also,

HYMNS TO JESUS.

O, give me grace of good ending,
And those that I am holden to.

Jesu, O, for the deadly tears
That Thou didst shed for my soul's sin ;
Hear Thou, and speed my piteous prayers,
And grant that heaven I may win.

Jesu, for them I pray Thee now
Who anger Thee in any way ;
Withhold Thy wrath, and teach them how
To serve Thee, too, henceforth, I pray.

Jesu, the greatest comforter
Of thy true servants every one,
O, comfort them that careful are,
And help them that are woe-begone.

Jesu, O, keep them that are good,
Amend them that have grievéd Thee,
And send them fruits of earthly food,
As each one needs in his degree.

HYMNS TO JESUS.

Jesu, in whom no falsehood is,
Almighty God in Trinity,
O, cease these wars, and send us peace,
With lasting love and charity.

Jesu, who art the corner-stone
Of Thy true church terrestrial,
O, bring thy folds and flocks in one,
And be the Shepherd of them all.

Jesu, O, for thy blesséd blood,
Bring, if Thou wilt, those souls to bliss
From whom I have had any good,
And spare what they have done amiss.
Amen.

BE THOU MY COMFORT, CHRIST JESUS.

JESU! who sprung of Jesse's root,
 As to us preached Thy prophet meet,
 Of David's stem both flower and fruit,
 Unto man's soul a savor sweet;
 Jesu! to man great gifts who brought
 When Gabriel did Mary greet,
 Who felled our foemen under foot
 And took in heaven a seemly seat;
 A maiden was Thy mother meet,
 Of whom Thou tookest flesh for us;
 As ye are both to me most sweet
 So be my comfort, Christ Jesus.

Jesu! who wert in thy years young
 All fair and fresh of hide and hue,
 When thou wert into thralldom thrown
 And tortured fierce by many a Jew,
 When blood and water were out-wrung,
 With beating was thy body blue;
 As a clot of clay, as earth and dung,
 Thy flesh into the grave they threw;

HYMNS TO JESUS.

But grace upon thy grave up-grew,
Full quickly sprung up joy to us ;
For His love who this counsel knew
Be Thou my comfort, Christ Jesus.

Jesu ! in truth both God and man,
Two natures knit in Godhead one,
The wondrous work that thus began
Thou didst fulfill in flesh and bone ;
Out of this world flew swiftly, then,
Thou, lifting up Thyself alone,
Full mightily didst rise and run
Straight to Thy Father on the throne ;
Now dare a man make no more moan ;
For man it was Thou wroughtest thus,
And God with man is made at one ;
So be my comfort, Christ Jesus !

Jesu ! my Saviour and my Friend !
Almighty God ! there is but One !
O Christ ! wilt Thou my soul defend,
From Thy true faith may I ne'er turn.

HYMNS TO JESUS.

Jesu! my succor and my food,
In body and in soul also,
My God! be Thou my greatest good,
And comfort me when cometh woe!
O Lord! Thou makest friend of foe,
Let me not lie in languor thus!
But see my sorrow, and say now "Ho,"
And be my comfort, Christ Jesus!

Jesu! O, to my cry take heed!
Great Prince of Peace! to Thee I pray!
'Thou wouldest bleed for man's great need,
And suffer many a fearful fray.
In all my need wilt Thou me feed
With holy patience, now and aye,
My life to lead, in word and deed,
As is most pleasant, in Thy way,
And to die well when 'tis my day;
Jesu! who died on earth for us,
Let me not be the foul fiend's prey,
But be my comfort, Christ Jesus! Amen.

THE LOVE OF JESUS.

LOVE is life that lasteth aye ;
Jesus Christ hath made it sure ;
Weal nor woe its power can slay ;
Wisest men have writ this lore.

Night love turneth into day ;
Toil it turneth into rest ;
Love thou well, and I hear say
Thou shalt have ever of the best.

Love is thought, with great desire
Out of the longing of the heart ;
Love I liken to a fire
That may not slake by any art.

Love doth cleanse us of our sin ;
Love to us our bliss shall bring ;

HYMNS TO JESUS.

Love the king's proud heart may win ;
Love of joy may ever sing.

Learn to love if thou wilt live,
And when thou shalt henceforth fare
All thy heart to Him then give,
Who shall keep thy soul from care.

Jesu ! who me Thy love hast lent
To Thy full love wilt Thou bring me !
Take unto Thee all mine intent,
My greatest yearning wilt Thou be !
That sin from me afar may go,
And thou my coveting become,
And that my soul may hear and know
Of Thy sweet loving all the song.

The joy that men on earth enjoy
Is full like to the ivy gay,
That now is fresh, and fair, and green,
And withers now anon, away.

HYMNS TO JESUS.

Such is the world, all men may know,
And such will be till judgment-day,
Full great the toil and much the woe,
Full bitter and full fierce the fray.

If thou leave evil in thy thought,
And hate the filthiness of sin,
And cling to Him who hath thee bought,
Then He will come and dwell within.
For all thy soul thy Lord has sought,
No part thereof He wills to miss ;
And thus shalt thou to joy be brought,
And in thy heart have heaven's bliss.

Forsooth, the way of love is this : —
Forever truly 'tis and true,
It standeth aye in stableness,
And leaveth never old for new ;
That wight that here such love may find,
Or ever in his heart it knew,
From care it turneth all his mind,
But such a mirth there find full few.

HYMNS TO JESUS.

Love is light and burneth fain ;
Love doth glad both young and old ;
Love is joy without a pain,
As lovers often have me told.

Love is aye the sweetest thing
That here on earth is given to man ;
Love is on high God's own darling ;
Love doth bind both blood and bann.

But all our fleshly love shall fare
As fare the merry flowers of May,
Its pleasantness shall last no more
But, as it were, an hour of day ;
Then sorrow cometh on full sore,
With lust and pride, and all their play,
And then the soul is lost in care,
And in the pain that lasteth aye.

But Jesu ! Son of God Thou art,
And Lord of most high Majesty !

HYMNS TO JESUS.

Send Thy true love unto my heart,
And make me only covet Thee !
For who loves Him he ever sings,
To his Lord Christ in melody ;
The love of Him o'ercomes all things ;
In love I live, in love I die.

In pleasantness and eke in pain
Thy sweetest love be ever mine !
From Jesus cometh all my gain,
My soul O take it, Lord, as Thine !
For since my wicked heart has known,
O Jesu, Lord, Thy love so sweet,
All woe away from me has gone,
And ne'er again shall we two meet.

Doomed was He the cross to bear,
My Jesu ! who was angels' food ;
With scourges Jews did wound him sore,
And bounden fast with cords He stood ;
His breast was bruised with beatings,

HYMNS TO JESUS.

With piercing spilt was His pure blood,
And painful thorns did crown that King
Who died for me upon the rood.

White was His cold and naked breast,
Red was His pierced and bloody side,
And grievéd was His face fairest,
His piteous wounds were deep and wide.
He that thus wrought have all thy thought
And lead it to His own deep lore ;
Give all thy heart to Christ, keep nought,
And love Him most for evermore.

In mirth he liveth night and day
Who loveth truly that sweet child,
All wrath from him would go away,
Were he a man most fierce and wild.
It is my Jesus, sooth to say,
Above all men most meek and mild,
He that in heart Him loves to-day,
From every ill He will him shield.

HYMNS TO JESUS.

There is no word on earth may tell
Of Jesu's love the great sweetness,
And steadfastly that love shall dwell,
That love, forever, is endless.
He shields me from the power of hell ;
His power and love can never cease ;
And ne'er my foes my soul shall quell,
And ne'er my love for Him grow less.

For Jesu's love it lasteth aye ;
To Him alone be our longing !
Jesu the night turns into day,
The darkness turns into day-spring !
Jesu ! think on us now and aye,
For thou, O Lord, we hold our King !
Jesu ! O grant us that we may
Thee ever love without ending.
Deo gracias.

*SEE WHAT OUR LORD SUFFERED FOR
OUR SAKE.*

BOTH young and old, whoe'er ye be,
In Jesu's name good cheer now make ;
Lift up your hearts, and look, and see,
What our Lord suffered for our sake.
As meek as any lamb was He ;
Example of Him we will take,
And suffer, too, in our degree,
And in His service ever wake.

And if our friends forsake us here,
So that we be left all alone,
On Jesus think, who bought us dear —
To Him we may make all our moan ;
For of that Lord full oft we hear
What wrong He suffered foes among ;
Even His disciples fled for fear,
And none abode but Mary and John.

HYMNS TO JESUS.

If any wrong to us be wrought,
Be it in word, either in deed,
Be of good hope ; think in thy thought,
How God may help us all at need ;
And think how Jesus Christ us bought,
And for our sins His blood must bleed.
For His own sins He suffered nought,
For He did never sinful deed.

If wicked men do us defame,
O, think how Christ was bought and sold ;
To suffer for Him is no shame,
But Him to serve let us be bold.
And if men hurt us in our name,
We must forgive, both young and old,
For, though we suffer sorest blame,
Christ suffered more a thousandfold.

And if of poverty we 'plain,
And wanting are in worldly good,
Think we on Jesus, Lord Sovereign,

HYMNS TO JESUS.

How poor He hung upon the rood,
And how He answered not again,
But e'er was meek and mild of mood ;
To follow Him we should be fain
In what degree soe'er we stood.

And though we have foes on each side;
And all about us wrong and woe,
Yet suffer meekly and abide,
And think that Jesus suffered, too.
And how full mighty dread He bore
Unto His cross when He must go ;
He suffered in His manhood more
Than e'er did man or e'er shall do.

Though we with wrong to death be brought,
Still sufferance is the safest way,
For love of Christ who hath us bought,
And died for us on Good Friday.
Wherefore (methinketh in my thought),
That we our Lord should please and pay,

HYMNS TO JESUS.

That we should set the world at nought,
And let the wicked have their day.

If thou in Jesus have delight,
Though all the world do thee assail,
Do thus, and thou shalt know aright
That meekness shall thee most avail ;
For who that suffers here despite,
And meek abideth here below,
To him 'twill turn to great delight,
And endless joy for all his woe.

If any do to us amiss,
Or us in any wise offend,
For love of Jesus, think on this,
And let thy meekness wrath amend.
Like Jesus Christ, be one of His,
And suffer meek what God will send,
'Then shalt thou be with Him in bliss
That e'er shall last and ne'er shall end.
Amen.

THE VIRTUES OF THE NAME JESUS.

IF thou wilt be well with God, and have grace to rule thy life, and come to the joy of love, this name Jesus, fasten it so fast in thy heart that it come never out of thy thought. And when thou speakest to Him, and sayest “Jesu” through custom, it shall be in thine ear joy, and in thy mouth honey, and in thy heart melody: For thou shalt think it joy to hear the name of Jesus be named, sweetness to speak it, mirth and song to think on it.

If thou think of Jesus continually, and hold it stably, it purgeth thy sin, it kindleth thine heart, it clarifieth thy soul, it removeth anger, it doeth away slowness, it endeth in love fulfilled of charity, it chaseth the devil, it putteth out dread, it openeth heaven, it

HYMNS TO JESUS.

maketh contemplative men have in mind oft
Jesus, and all vices and phantoms it putteth
from the lover.

If thou do after this lore, thou need'st not
covet many books. Hold love in heart and
in work, and thou shalt have all that we may
say or write, for the fullness of the law is
charity ; on that hangeth all.





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